

United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

April 15, 2009

Dear Tea Party Participants,

It is great to see Americans exercising their constitutional rights. As your elected representative, I want to let you know what I have been doing to promote a fiscally-responsible government.

In the three months since I took office there has been an unprecedented increase in government spending with the release of additional TARP (Toxic Assets Relief Program) funds, the so-called stimulus package and the FY 2009 and 2010 budgets. In all four cases I urged my Senate colleagues to slow the process down, thoroughly debate the bills, and remove wasteful spending. In the end, I could not persuade them to enact responsible legislation so I voted against each of those measures.

In an effort to improve the bills, I did support a number of amendments, a few of which were passed. Those items include the following:

- An amendment to strip \$7.7 billion in earmarks from the FY 09 appropriation bill
- An amendment to make the marriage penalty tax relief permanent
- An amendment to provide up to \$15,000 in tax credits for home purchases (it was reduced to \$8,000 in a conference committee)
- Co-sponsored a substitute to the stimulus bill that would have had zero cost
- Co-sponsored a bill to investigate the near collapse of the U.S. financial system
- Supported a budget freeze for FY 2009
- Supported an amendment to prevent taxpayer-funded bailouts for automakers
- Supported the establishment of a reserve-fund to address our national debt
- Supported an amendment to end automatic pay raises for Congress
- Supported an amendment to prohibit the Federal Communications Commission from spending funds to reinstate the Fairness Doctrine

Although my efforts to rein in spending have in many cases been unsuccessful, I remain committed to restoring solid fiscal principles to government. I have signed on as a co-sponsor to a bill by Senator Jim DeMint that calls for a ban on earmarks. I am working on the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee to ensure that the new package of energy legislation expected later this year is both reasonable and fiscally responsible. And I am always looking for ways to end government's uncontrolled appetite for spending.

These are difficult times for America, but together, we can make a difference and return our country back to fiscal responsibility.

Very Truly Yours,



James E. Risch
United States Senator